



INFORMATION BULLETIN

New Hampshire Bureau of Emergency Communications

Un-initialized Cellular Phones

March, 2001



The New Hampshire Bureau of Emergency Communications is the only organization in New Hampshire exclusively dedicated to educating the public and 9-1-1 public safety community on 9-1-1 technology and policies. Naturally, your initiative to protect domestic violence victims via the 9-1-1 program "Call to Protect" is of great interest to us. Our agency views any effort to help victims of crime, and domestic violence in particular, as a noble and worthy cause. We strongly believe that initiatives that enjoy collaboration from both the private and public sectors are powerful tools in promoting safety. Our concern with the program is that there are certain limits on the technical capabilities of the cell phones you are using that should be communicated to the users of the phones. For your reference and to support your efforts, we would like to relay the following information that

we believe are important issues for the users of the "Call to Protect" phones.

1. The 9-1-1 center will not have a number identification to call the victim back if the initial call is lost, or if the victim has to terminate the call under duress or other circumstances. For normal wireline telephones, the 9-1-1 center has the capability to call back the party who abandons the call to verify the need for an emergency response. Many successful rescues and police interventions have been assisted by this feature. It must be known by the users of these phones that this feature does not exist with the "Call to Protect" phones.

2. The program's phones do not provide "automatic location information" to the 9-1-1 center. Users of these phones should be told that they must know their physical location and be able to communicate this clearly to the 9-1-1 center. Unlike regular landline telephones, the "Call to Protect" cell phones used in the program cannot be tracked. (For regular cell phones, with active service accounts, the FCC has mandated this capability by October 1, 2001, with some exceptions and phase-in provisions.)



3. Users should allow a few more seconds for an answer when calling 9-1-1. In general, wireless or cell phone calls to 9-1-1 take a few seconds longer than a traditional wireline call to 9-1-1. Given the lack of location or number identification, again, it is imperative that the users of these calls stay on the line until the call is answered.

It is our hope that this information can be passed on to the users of the "Call to Protect" phones. Because of the excellent enhanced 9-1-1 network in New Hampshire, people have come to take for granted that their 9-1-1 call will be routed to the local



dispatch point with their telephone number and their location displayed in front of a public safety dispatcher. As stated above, the issuance of the "Call to Protect" phones is a noble and worthy cause, which we support. However, we feel that our agency has a responsibility to inform you and the users of these phones. Specifically, these phones lack many of the enhanced features of 9-1-1 that our citizens have been accustomed to and could lead to false security with the use of these phones. Our organization is more than willing to review any final instructions you prepare for your users, or answer any question you may have regarding 9-1-1 services. We would be glad to work with you on this program. Please feel free to call us if you have any questions or we can help in any way, 271-6911.